

**PROCEEDINGS**

OF THE

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF DELEGATES**

FROM THE

**MEMBERS AND LOCAL PREACHERS**

OF THE

**Methodist Episcopal Church,**

**FRIENDLY TO REFORM,**

**Assembled in the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church,**

IN THE

**CITY OF BALTIMORE, NOV. 15, 1827.**

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**Baltimore:**

PRINTED BY JOHN D. TOY,  
*Corner of St. Paul and Market streets.*

1827.



and rights, and lowering in their estimation the preachers, with their dignity and their usefulness. It is high time, and late enough, for the peace of the church within, as well as for her respectability, and usefulness without, that some legitimate and *constitutional* system were adopted.

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EXTRACT OF A LETTER

*From Mr. E. Hall, to the Chairman of the Corresponding Committee, dated Cincinnati, February 27, 1827.*

DEAR BROTHER,

"Your letter came to hand, and should have been answered before now, but I wished to lay it before our Union Society.

I think it is now almost reduced to a certainty, that we shall have a state convention. Our society, last night, appointed two delegates, to meet the Miami Union Society, (which takes place the second Tuesday of next month,) in order to discuss the subject. O. M. Spencer, and myself, are appointed to meet said society; with instructions, to use our best endeavours to have a state convention; and, for that convention to meet in Cincinnati. I think, there is little doubt that we shall have one shortly, as our society have lately become much in favour of it. I have for a long time past, been satisfied of its utility; but a large majority of the society, did not see the beneficial effects arising from it, until lately. I am happy to inform you, and all my reforming brethren, that the cause of reform is rapidly advancing in the State of Ohio. I do not believe that at any one period, the cause has prospered equally to what it does at present.

New Richmond, a town about twenty miles above this, where I have been trying these two years past, to get some of the society in that town, to take the Mutual Rights, but did not succeed, until about three months ago, when I prevailed on Mr. T. to subscribe. I saw him a few days ago, and he told me that the Mutual Rights are carrying all before them; and I saw Dr. J. this day, who lives in the same town, who says they are going to form a Union Society immediately, and that the Mutual Rights have converted nearly the whole society in that place. Such is the blessed effect of investigation. I sincerely believe, the Lord has a hand in this work, and it must and will prosper.

I think "Timothy" has made some just remarks on the conduct of our junior bishop. I hope, he and Dissenter, will continue to write. Bartimeus is a host in himself."

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EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM FREDERICK COUNTY, DATED  
MARCH 5TH, 1827.

"MESSRS. EDITORS,

Presuming you wish to hear, for the purpose of communicating all the information attainable, in the progress of the laudable work in which you are engaged, I deem it proper to inform you, that, on the

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ERRATA.—At page 214, read Rev. Benton Field for Rev. Wm. Compton. We were led into the error by the controversy between Ivey Harris and Wm. Compton.



# JOURNAL.

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AGREEABLY to previous notice, a Convention of delegates of Reformers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was held in the city of Baltimore, on the 15th November, 1827, when brother Nicholas Snethen, of Maryland, was appointed president pro tem. of the meeting, and brother Gideon Davis, D. C. secretary, pro tem.

On motion of brother French, it was *resolved*, That a committee be appointed to make out a list of the delegates that have been appointed to attend the Convention.

Whereupon, brothers John French and Moses M. Henkle were appointed said committee.

The names of the delegates being called, it appeared that the following brethren had been duly appointed or elected:

## OHIO.

|                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| †Rev. Archibald Hawkins.            | †Mr. William Disney.           |
| †Rev. Moses M. Henkle.              | Mr. William B. Evans.          |
| Rev. David McMasters. <sup>1</sup>  | Mr. Alexander Sutherland.      |
| Rev. James Towler. <sup>2</sup>     | Mr. John Stricker.             |
| Rev. Daniel Inskeep.                | Mr. William Griffith.          |
| Rev. Thomas Scott.                  | Mr. Thomas McEver.             |
| Rev. Evert Richman. <sup>3</sup>    | Dr. James T. Johnson.          |
| Dr. Shadrach Bostwick. <sup>4</sup> | Mr. Benson Goldsberry.         |
| †Mr. Stephen B. Cleaveland.         | Mr. Stephen Bell. <sup>5</sup> |

## NEW-YORK.

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| †Joseph K. Owens, Esq. | David Ayres, Esq. |
|------------------------|-------------------|

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

|                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| †Rev. William Lamphier. | †Mr. William King.    |
| †Mr. Gideon Davis.      | †Mr. Nathaniel Brady. |

## NORTH CAROLINA.

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| †Rev. William W. Hill. | Rev. Thomas Moore.       |
| †Rev. Willis Harris.   | Mr. Augustus Claibourne. |

For an explanation of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, see Appendix.  
Those marked thus (†) were present.



9 o'clock, to adjourn at 1—to meet again at 3 o'clock, and adjourn at 5.

On motion of brother Palmer, it was *resolved* unanimously, That the meetings of the Convention be with open doors.

On motion of brother Harrod, it was *resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to regulate preaching.

Whereupon, brothers John J. Harrod, Thomas Mummey, and Ephraim Smith were appointed.

On motion of brother Davis, it was *resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to draft rules and regulations for the government of the Convention, when brothers G. Davis, A. McCaine, and C. Avery, were appointed said committee.

Brother Davis, from the committee appointed to draft rules and regulations for the government of the Convention, made a report, which, after some amendment, was adopted as follows, viz:

*Resolved*, That the following rules shall govern the proceedings of this Convention, during its sittings:

1. The meetings of the Convention shall be opened and concluded with singing and prayer, under the direction of the president.

2. The proceedings of the preceding session shall be read by the secretary, at the commencement of each session.

3. The president shall have power to appoint all committees, except such as the Convention may chose to appoint.

4. All motions shall be submitted in writing, and read in the first instance by the members offering them, excepting those made to amend, postpone, or adjourn.

5. No discussion will be allowed, except on a distinct motion, as provided in the 4th rule.

6. It shall be the privilege of the president to call to the chair any delegate, whenever he may be disposed to partake in the debate. *who is in the chair shall not be permitted to*

7. No member shall speak more than twice upon any question, except by consent of a majority of the Convention.

8. No personal reflections will be allowed, and any member indulging in the same, shall be liable to be called to order.

9. A majority of the members of the Convention shall form a quorum.

10. The president shall decide all questions of order, from whose decision, however, an appeal may be made to the Convention.

Convention adjourned to meet at 3 o'clock, P. M.



PENNSYLVANIA.

|                           |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| †Rev. Charles Avery.      | Mr. Patrick Leonard.  |
| †Rev. Anthony A. Palmer.  | Mr. William Scholey.  |
| †Mr. William S. Stockton. | Mr. John Bissell.     |
| †Mr. John Mecasky.        | Mr. Samuel Bushfield. |
| †Mr. John S. Furey.       | Mr. Henry Ebert.      |
| †Mr. James Kelch.         | Mr. William Robinson. |
| †Mr. James McKim.         | Mr. Samuel Haslet.    |

VIRGINIA.

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| †Rev. Dr. John French.    | †Mr. John Blount.          |
| †Rev. Charles Roundtree.  | †Mr. John Jones.           |
| †Rev. Richard Gilham.     | Mr. Richard H. Ramsay.     |
| †Rev. Richard Latimore.   | Robert Bailey, Esq.        |
| †Rev. Dr. John B. Tilden. | Joseph Ball, Esq.          |
| Rev. William H. Coman.    | †Dr. Andrew B. Woodley.    |
| Rev. Benedict Burgess.    | †Mr. George O. F. Andrews. |
| Rev. David T. Ball.       | †Mr. Jordan Edwards.       |

MARYLAND.

*Western Shore.*

†Rev. Dr. S. K. Jennings.  
 †Rev. Alexander McCaine.  
 †Rev. William Bowden.  
 †Rev. Benjamin Richardson.  
 †Rev. Eli Henkle.  
 †Rev. Daniel Chambers.  
 †Rev. Nicholas Snethen.  
 Rev. Slingsby Linthicum.  
 †Mr. John Chappell.  
 †Mr. John J. Harrod.  
 †Mr. Thomas Mummey.  
 †Mr. Ephraim Smith.  
 †Mr. Philip S. Chappell.  
 †Mr. Biscoe Doxey.  
 †Charles Jessop, Esq.  
 Mr. Edward Hall.  
 †Mr. Samuel Willis.  
 †Mr. Jasper Peddicord.  
 †Mr. Hezekiah Linthicum.  
 †Mr. Richard A. Ridgely.  
 †Mr. Elias Crutchley.

†Mr. Nicholas Durbin.

†Mr. Thomas W. Boyd.  
 Ignatius Davis, Esq.  
 †Mr. William Bradford.  
 Mr. Kidd Morsel.

*Eastern Shore.*

Rev. Francis Waters, D. D.  
 †Rev. Thomas Walker.  
 Rev. D. Watts.  
 †William Quinton, Esq.  
 Hon. Philemon B. Hopper.  
 Thomas Roberts, Esq.  
 Edward Anderson, Esq.  
 †John Constable, Esq.  
 †William R. Stewart, Esq.  
 †Mr. William H. Waters.  
 †Mr. John Wesley Bordley.  
 Rev. Arva Melwin.  
 †Mr. John Turner.  
 Mr. William R. Durdning.  
 Mr. John Cropper.  
 Richard Bayley, Esq.

On motion of brother Henkle, of Md. it was *resolved*,  
 That the hours of meeting and adjournment, shall be as  
 follows, viz:—the hour for meeting in the morning shall be



be appointed, and instructed to inquire and report on the alleged grounds of the trials and suspensions of brother Samuel K. Jennings, and other local ministers of the Methodist Episcopal church; and likewise of the alleged grounds of trials of certain lay members of the same church; and that they also inquire and report on the expediency of this Convention appointing a general committee of safety and privileges.

On motion by brother Furey, of Philadelphia, the following was offered as a substitute to the resolution:—

Whereas it is understood by this Convention that a number of local preachers and private members of our church, have, of late, been tried, and the former suspended, therefore, *resolved*, That a committee be hereby appointed, and instructed to inquire into the alleged causes of said suspensions, and report to this Convention.

Determined in the negative.

The question then recurring on the original resolution, was determined in the affirmative.

And brothers Willis Harris, of N. C., Wm. Disney, of Ohio, Wm. S. Stockton, of Philadelphia, Charles Avery, of Pittsburg, and Nicholas Snethen, of Md., were appointed by the Convention said committee.

Brother Davis, of the D. C., offered the following resolution:—

*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed to draw up an address, in favour of reform, to the members of our church.

On motion of Brother Henkle, of Ohio, it was proposed that the resolution be amended by adding “and that they report the same to this Convention.”

Determined in the affirmative.

The question was then put, will the Convention agree to the resolution as amended.

Determined in the affirmative.

The following persons were then appointed:—Brothers Charles Avery, of Pittsburg, Gideon Davis, of the D. C., R. Latimore, of Va., John W. Bordley, of Md., and Wm. W. Hill, of N. C.

The committee appointed to draft a memorial asked leave of absence, which was granted.

Brother Hill, of N. C., asked to be excused from serving on the committee to prepare an address, which was granted.

Brother Bordley, of Md., made the same request, which was also granted.



*Thursday, November 15—3 o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment, when the minutes of the preceding session were read and corrected.

Brother Davis having resigned his seat as secretary, on motion of brother Harrod, brother Henry Willis, of Frederick county, Md. was appointed secretary, and brother Luther J. Cox, of Baltimore, assistant secretary to the Convention.

The president submitted a preamble and resolution of the Frederick county Union Society, which, by order of the Convention, was read and laid on the table.

A communication from the associated friends to reform in Philadelphia was also read, and by order of the Convention, was laid on the table.

Brother Davis, offered the following resolution:—

*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to draft a memorial to the General Conference, setting forth the defectiveness of our present church polity.

On motion, it was *resolved*, That the committee on the memorial consist of seven members, and that one delegate be selected out of each state that is represented in this Convention, including the District of Columbia—whereupon the the chair appointed the following brethren, viz: William S. Stockton, of Philadelphia, Stephen B. Cleaveland, Ohio, Gideon Davis, D. C., J. K. Owen, N. Y., John W. Bordley, Md., John C. French, Va., and Wm. W. Hill, of N. C.

On motion, it was, *resolved*, That the president pro tem. of this Convention, be added to said committee.

Convention adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

*Friday morning, November 16.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment, when the following delegates appeared and took their seats, viz: brothers William R. Stewart, John Constable, John Turner, and William Bradford, of Md., and brother Andrew Woodley, and George O. F. Andrews, of Virginia.

The minutes of the preceding session were read.

On motion of brother Latimore, of Virginia, seconded by brother McCaine, of Md. the Convention went into the election of a president, when brother William R. Stewart, of Md., was elected by a unanimous vote of the Convention, and, after an appropriate address, took the chair.

On motion of brother Wm. S. Stockton, of Philadelphia, the following resolution was submitted:—

*Resolved*, by this Convention, That a committee of five



bled in Convention, will be at their service during the ensuing sabbath.

Brother Mecaskey, of Philadelphia, offered the following resolution as a substitute:

*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to inform the Rev. Mr. Hanson and the Rev. Mr. Waugh, that there are now in this city a number of local preachers from different parts of the United States, who will be at their service on tomorrow.

On motion of brother Latimore, of Virginia, the resolution and substitute were laid on the table.

On motion of brother Brady, of the D. C. the unfinished business of yesterday was then taken up, viz: the resolution of brother Davis, of D. C. in relation to a memorial for the signatures of reformers.

Brother Avery, of Pittsburg, moved that the resolution be indefinitely postponed, and after some time having been spent in debate thereon, the question was taken and determined in the affirmative.

Brother Snethen, of Maryland, chairman of the committee, appointed to prepare a memorial to the General Conference, submitted the report of the committee, which, by order of the Convention, was read by the chairman of said committee, and ordered to lie on the table.

Brother Harrod, of Baltimore, presented a memorial, drafted by brother Francis Waters, E. S. Maryland, which, on motion of brother Kelch, of Philadelphia, was read by brother Harrod, and

On motion of brother Davis, D. C., was laid on the table.

Brother S. K. Jennings presented a letter from brother Asa Shinn, of the Pittsburg conference, and asked leave to read the same, which was granted.

On motion of brother Henkle, of Ohio, the letter was laid on the table.

Brother Jennings presented another letter from a traveling preacher, which was also read, and laid on the table.

Convention adjourned to meet at 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Saturday, November 17—3 o'clock, P. M.*

Convention met agreeably to adjournment, when the proceedings of the previous session were read and approved.

Brother Bordley, of Maryland, presented a memorial addressed to the General Conference, drafted by brother Davis, D. C. which, by order of the Convention, was read by



The president submitted a communication, presented by brother Jennings, from brother Asa Shinn, of the Pittsburg Conference, which was read; and on motion, by brother Henkle, of Ohio, the same was referred to the consideration of the memorializing committee.

The president appointed brother Wm. H. Waters, of Md., and Willis Harris, of N. C., to fill the vacancy in the committee of address, occasioned by the resignation of brothers Bordley and Hill.

The Convention adjourned until 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Friday, November 16—3 o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment, when the proceedings of the preceding session were read and corrected. Brother Mecaskey of Philadelphia, submitted the following resolution.

*Resolved*, That the word brother be invariably prefixed to the names of the delegates appearing on the journal, excepting when ministers and doctors are spoken of, who shall always have their proper titles given them.

On motion by brother Henkle, of Ohio, the resolution was divided, and all after the word "journal" was stricken out. The question then recurring on the first division, was determined in the affirmative.

Brother Davis, of the D. C., offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the committee appointed to draft a memorial to the General Conference be instructed to prepare the form of a memorial to be submitted to the membership, and local preachers for their signatures, in addition to the one to be adopted by this Convention.

After some debate on the foregoing resolution, the Convention adjourned to meet at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

*Saturday, November 17—9 o'clock, A. M.*

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

The proceedings of the previous session were read, when the unfinished business was taken up, viz: the resolution submitted by brother Davis, D. C. which, on motion of brother Harrod, of Baltimore, was laid on the table.

Brother Henkle, of Maryland, submitted to the Convention the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the secretary be authorised to address a note forthwith to the Rev. Mr. Hanson, and the Rev. Mr. Waugh, informing them that the local preachers now assem-



The committee retired, and, after a short interval, returned and reported the memorial as amended, which was read by the chairman of the committee.

The Convention then adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Monday, November 19—3 o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met. The proceedings of the previous session were read and approved.

The unfinished business of last session was called up, and the memorial, after sundry additional amendments, was put upon its final passage, and determined in the affirmative.

Brother Stockton, chairman of the committee to examine the alleged causes of the recent trials, &c. presented a report, which, by order of the convention, was read by brother Snethen.

The Convention then adjourned until 6½ o'clock this evening.

*Monday, 19th November—6½ o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment.

The proceedings of the previous session were read and approved; when the consideration of the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the alleged grounds of the recent trials, &c. was resumed, and on motion of brother Harris, of North Carolina, was amended by inserting the 6th paragraph. The report as amended was then laid on the table.

Brother Hill, of N. Carolina, from the committee appointed to prepare an address to the members of the Methodist Episcopal church throughout the United States, presented a report, as a substitute to the one reported by said committee, and read during the session of Saturday afternoon, which substitute, by order of the Convention, was read by brother Hill, and on motion, ordered to lie on the table.

Brother Avery, of Pittsburg, chairman of the committee appointed to prepare an address to the members of the Methodist Episcopal church throughout the United States, presented the report read during the session of Saturday afternoon, and which had been re-committed to said committee, and by order of the convention was again read by brother Davis, D. C. The address was then put on its final passage and determined in the affirmative.

The president submitted a communication addressed to the Convention by the Union Society of Centreville, Indiana, which was read, and on motion of brother Henkle, of Ohio, was laid on the table.



brother Davis; and on motion of brother Snethen, of Maryland, was laid on the table.

Brother Davis, D. C., of the committee appointed to prepare an address to the Methodists throughout the United States, submitted the report, which, by order of the Convention, was read, and on motion of brother Brady, D. C., was re-committed to the same committee, who reported it.— See Address.

On motion of brother Latimore, of Virginia, brother Hill, of N. C. was added to said committee.

Convention adjourned to meet at St. John's church, in Liberty street, at half past six, P. M.

*Saturday—6½ o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met in St. John's Church, Liberty street, agreeably to adjournment.

Brother Davis, D. C. moved the reading of the memorial reported by the committee; determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother Kelch, of Philadelphia, the same was read by paragraphs, and sundry amendments proposed and adopted.

The Convention adjourned to meet at the place of their former sessions in Lexington street, 9 o'clock on Monday morning.

*Monday morning, November 19.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment. The proceedings of the two previous sessions were read and approved. Brother Wm. Quinton, of Somerset county, Maryland, appeared, and took his seat in Convention.

On motion of brother Harrod, of Baltimore, brother L. J. Cox, was elected by the Convention to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of brother H. Willis, secretary, the indisposition of whose family required his absence from the Convention.

On motion of brother J. Chappell, seconded by brother McCaine, of Maryland, it was *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention be presented to brother Hill, of N. C. for the discourse he delivered last evening, and that he be requested to furnish a copy of the same for publication.

On motion of brother Davis, of D. C. the Convention resumed the consideration of the memorial to the General Conference.

On motion of brother Davis, of D. C. the said report and memorial as amended, was re-committed for examination.



they could not attend the Convention, &c. which, by order of the Convention, was read and laid on the table. (See Appendix.)

A letter from brother Brady, apologizing for his absenting himself from the Convention before its final adjournment, was read and laid on the table.

The report of the committee appointed to inquire into the alleged causes of the recent trial and suspension of a number of Reformers, &c. was called up.

Brother Furey, of Philadelphia, moved to strike out the 6th paragraph, which had been inserted as an amendment, which was determined in the negative.

On motion of brother Mecaskey, of Philadelphia, the paragraph adopted as an amendment to the report, be re-considered.

The Convention adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Tuesday, 20th November—3 o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment.

The proceedings of the preceding session were read and approved.

When the unfinished business was called up, being a motion to re-consider the amendment to the report of the committee of inquiry, the question, "Will the Convention re-consider the amendment?" was determined in the negative.

On motion of brother Snethen, of Md. the report was amended by adding thereto the 7th paragraph.

The question then recurring on the report as amended, was determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother Mecaskey, of Philadelphia, *resolved*, That the members of the Convention present to the Methodist Reformers, and the citizens generally of the city of Baltimore, their grateful acknowledgments for the kind attention and generous hospitality with which they have treated the delegates from the different and distant parts of the United States—determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

On motion of brother Cleaveland, of Ohio, *resolved*, That the thanks of this Convention, be presented to the minister and trustees of the First English Evangelical Lutheran church, for the kindness they have evinced to its members, in granting them the use of their house, in which they have been in session—determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

Brother Quinton, of Md. moved to increase the number of the committee to be appointed to present the Memorial to the General Conference—determined in the negative.



On motion of brother Stockton, of Philadelphia, *resolved*, That 5,000 copies of the Journal of this Convention,—the Memorial to the General Conference, and the Address to the members of the church, be published together in a pamphlet of the octavo form, and that the members of this Convention be requested to state how many copies they suppose will be necessary for the supply of their several sections of country, and that it shall be the duty of the publishing committee, to supply the delegates with the number of copies each may request, with an understanding, that they will hold themselves responsible for the number of copies they may take.

On motion, the resolution was laid on the table.

Brother Davis, of D. C. offered the following resolution: *Resolved*, that a delegation of three persons, be appointed to attend the General Conference, in order to present to that body the Memorial of the Reformers, passed by this Convention, and that they are hereby instructed to use every proper effort during their continuance at said Conference, to further the interest of Reformers—determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother Mecaskey, of Philadelphia, *resolved*, That the thanks of the Convention be given to brother Sneath, for the sermon preached by him on last Sabbath morning, and that he be respectfully solicited to furnish a copy thereof for insertion in the Mutual Rights.

Convention adjourned, to meet again at 9 o'clock next morning.

*Tuesday, 20th November—9 o'clock, A. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment.

The proceedings of the preceding session were read and approved.

The unfinished business of last session was called up, viz: the resolution of brother Mecaskey; and being under consideration, the question was put, and determined in the affirmative unanimously.

On motion of brother McCaine, of Md. the resolution offered by brother Stockton last session, in relation to publishing the proceedings of the Convention be amended, by adding thereto, "under the direction of a committee to consist of five"—determined in the affirmative.

The question recurring on the passage of the resolution as amended, was determined in the affirmative.

The president then presented a letter from brothers James Towler and Stephen Bell, of Ohio, assigning the reason why



Brother Hill, of North Carolina, offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That a committee consisting of nine members be appointed, and instructed to call a General Convention of representatives of Methodist Reformers, to assemble in the city of Baltimore, if in the opinion of the committee, the meeting of a General Convention should be necessary for the promotion of the great principles of christian liberty in the Methodist Episcopal church, or for other purposes of importance to the general interests of the Methodist Reformers.

Brother Snethen, of Md. moved to amend the resolution, by inserting the words, "Committee of vigilance and correspondence"—determined in the affirmative.

Brother McCaine moved to amend, by inserting the word, "majority,"—determined in the affirmative.

Brother Henkle, of Ohio, moved to amend by inserting the words, "The committee be selected from each state represented in the Convention"—determined in the negative.

Brother McCaine, of Md. moved to amend, by striking out all after the word "church"—determined in the affirmative.

Brother Henkle, of Ohio, moved to amend by striking out that part of the resolution restricting the appointment of the committee to the members of the Convention---determined in the affirmative.

The question recurring on the resolution as amended, was put, and determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother Palmer, of Philadelphia, *resolved* by this Convention, That it is deemed of the utmost importance to the cause of christian liberty in the Methodist Episcopal church, for the Methodist Reformers to use all lawful means to increase the circulation of the periodical entitled, "The Mutual Rights;" and this Convention hereby earnestly recommend that its increased circulation be made the special business of each member of this Convention---determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother Stockton, of Philadelphia, *resolved*, That the committee of publication be requested to deposit the manuscript documents connected with the proceedings of this Convention, in the archives of the Union Society of the city of Baltimore for preservation, after they have revised and published them according to a previous resolution.

Determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

On motion of brother Henkle, of Ohio, *resolved*, That the president of this Convention be requested to serve as one of the delegates to present the Memorial to the General Conference.



Brother Stockton, of Philadelphia, offered the following resolution:

*Resolved* by this Convention, that the report of the committee appointed to examine the alleged causes of the late trials, &c. be printed with the Journal—determined in the affirmative.

Brother Henkle, of Md. offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the memorials presented to this Convention from Dr. Waters and brother G. Davis, likewise the paper presented in the form of an address by brother Hill, and that by Dr. Jennings, from a travelling preacher, on the presiding elder question, be referred to the editorial committee of the Mutual Rights, to publish such parts of them as they may think proper—determined in the affirmative.

On motion of brother McCaine, of Md. it was *resolved*, that the committee appointed to superintend the publication of the memorial to the General Conference, &c. correct the Journal of the proceedings of this Convention.

Brother Hill, of North Carolina, offered the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That this Convention appoint another convention in the city of Baltimore, or elsewhere, and that they do hereby appoint such an one to convene as aforesaid.

On motion, the resolution was laid on the table.

On motion of brother Hill, of North Carolina, *resolved*, that the thanks of this Convention be respectfully presented, and that they are hereby thus presented to the president, for his able and impartial discharge of the duties of the chair—determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

On motion of brother McCaine, of Md. the following be added: "Also to each of the secretaries, for the laborious, patient, and very satisfactory manner in which they have respectively performed the services imposed on them by their appointment—determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

The president then proceeded to appoint the revising and publishing committee as follows: brothers S. K. Jennings, J. J. Harrod, John Chappell, L. J. Cox, and P. S. Chappell.

The Convention then adjourned to meet at 6½ o'clock, P. M.

*Tuesday, 20th November—6½ o'clock, P. M.*

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment.

The proceedings of the preceding session were read and approved.



Brother Snethen moved that the vote be taken standing, which, being put, was determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

On motion by brother Furey, seconded by brother Mecaskey, that brother Snethen be requested to deliver an address to the Convention before they adjourn, which was determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

Whereupon brother Snethen proceeded to address the Convention, which, after singing and prayer, adjourned *sine die*.

## MEMORIAL

*To the Bishops and the Delegates of the Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled:*

RESPECTED BRETHREN,

1. We beg leave to inform you that we have assembled together in this city, (Baltimore,) in virtue of an appointment by our brethren, the members and local preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church friendly to reform, in the neighbourhoods and districts where we severally reside, for the purposes of petitioning and memorializing the General Conference upon the subject of lay and local representation in the legislative department of the church, and certain other matters. We have, therefore, taken the title of, The General Convention of Delegates of the Members and Local Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, friendly to Reform; and you will please to consider us as addressing you, not in our own names only, but in behalf of our brethren who appointed us, or approved of our appointment.

2. We wish it to be distinctly understood, that we do not intend to use any word or phrase, calculated to wound the feelings of any member of the General Conference, or of the travelling connexion.

3. All our brethren who have made known to us their opinions and desires respecting the subject of reform, or changes in the government of the church generally, agree that a representation of the lay members and of the local preachers, in the General Conference, or the legislative department of our government, is by far the most important. We speak advisedly, when we say, the opinion is daily gaining ground among our personal friends and correspondents, that the extension of the principle of representation to



Determined in the affirmative, unanimously.

The president then proceeded to appoint brother N. Snethen, of Md., and Dr. Henry D. Sellers, of Pittsburg, to serve in conjunction with himself in the said delegation.

On motion of brother Stockton, of Philadelphia, the Convention was requested to say what number of the Journal of the Convention, when printed, each would take and be responsible for; 3125 copies were subscribed for by the following persons:—

|                        |     |                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| William S. Stockton    | 300 | Wm. Quinton & Francis  |     |
| Charles Avery          | 500 | Waters                 | 100 |
| S. B. Cleaveland & Wm. |     | Dr. John French        | 100 |
| Disney                 | 500 | Chas. Roundtree, G. O. |     |
| A. Hawkins             | 100 | F. Andrews, J. Blunt   |     |
| Moses M. Henkle        | 50  | & D. A. Woodley        | 100 |
| A. McCaine             | 200 | R. Latimore & Jordan   |     |
| Baltimore Delegation   | 500 | Edwards                | 50  |
| E. Henkle              | 15  | J. B. Tilden           | 50  |
| William Bradford       | 50  | Willis Harris          | 50  |
| N. Snethen             | 50  | William W. Hill        | 60  |
| J. Peddicord           | 20  | J. K. Owen & D. Ayres  | 50  |
| Wm. R. Stewart         | 10  | Benedict Burgess       | 20  |
| J. W. Bordley          | 100 | Gideon Davis           | 100 |
| John Constable         | 50  |                        |     |
| TOTAL 3125             |     |                        |     |

The president then proceeded to appoint the committee of vigilance and correspondence, when the following brethren were appointed: S. K. Jennings, A. McCaine, John J. Harrod, Luther J. Cox, W. Starr, J. W. Bordley, N. Snethen, F. Waters, and E. Henkle.

Brother Furey, of Philadelphia, offered the following preamble and resolution:—

Whereas it has been stated before this Convention, that there are members of the Methodist Episcopal church who entertain an opinion that the Mutual Rights advocates principles repugnant to the plan of itinerancy; and whereas this Convention are anxious to remove any prejudices which may have been formed in the minds of any of our brethren, by those opposed to the principles of reform—Therefore *resolved*, by this Convention, That the editing committee of the Mutual Rights be requested to continue, as they have heretofore done, to exclude from the pages of the Mutual Rights every article which would have a tendency injuriously to affect itinerancy.



diminished. When all the legislative power in a state is in the hands of a monarch, or the nobles, or in both conjointly, none is left for the people. So likewise in a church, when all its legislative power is in the hands of the bishops, or the bishops and a particular order of ministers, none remains to the members, or to any other order of ministers: and any portion of power which may be granted to the people in a state, or to the members in a church, diminishes to that amount the sum which was in the hands of the civil or religious ruler or rulers. The truth of these axioms might also be illustrated by a variety of examples, but they need only to be stated to be understood. We, therefore, feel ourselves warranted in asserting this kind of analogy between a monarchy, or an aristocracy, in a state; and a hierarchy or exclusive sovereignty of priests or ministers, in a church. Power in both must bear certain relations. People in a state, who have no legislative power, cannot make, nor assist to make, any of the laws. But simple and obvious as these truths are, facts and circumstances have led, and indeed almost compelled us to believe, that they have not been sufficiently reflected upon: and we cannot conceal our fears, that even some among the members of the General Conference may be apt to overlook them in arguing upon the great question of power.

5. Are not the subjects of the most absolute religious sovereigns and the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, while destitute of legislative power, equally alike, cyphers to the legislative department of those governments? Not only can no ingenuity of the human mind alter this law of cause and effect, but we cannot conceive of any power that can alter it. To our apprehension it is not only like the principle of universal gravity, which operates upon all bodies according to the quantity of matter contained in them, but like absolute necessity itself: it is so, and it must be so, and it cannot be otherwise—that, while all the legislative power is in the hands of the travelling preachers, none can be in the hands of the members of the church and the local preachers. Monarchy, or absolute sovereignty, by the very nature of its existence excludes liberty—they cannot remain together at the same time and place. Were we to make these statements of civil governments only, all persons in the General Conference, and out of it, we are persuaded, would instantly and universally admit them. How is it, then, that no sooner than we refer to the liberties of the church, we are met with the strange prejudice about the



the members and the local preachers of the church, by the General Conference, in compliance with a petition of this kind, at this conjuncture of time, would do more towards conciliating good feeling, restoring lost confidence among brethren, and confirming wavering minds, on all sides, than any other measure which can be adopted.

4. The subject of lay and local representation, may be considered as a matter of right, and as a matter of liberty. The members of this Convention are aware that much exception has been taken to the claim of right, and that it has been frequently argued, and attempted to be proved, that the members and local preachers have no right to a seat in the legislative department of the government. We will, therefore, take an argumentative view of this question in a form somewhat different from those which have become the most familiar, and which have been frequently found to fail to convince individuals. We begin then by assuming that a monarchy, or an exclusive sovereignty in a civil community, or state, necessarily, and in the nature of things, deprives the people of their liberties—that a hierarchy, or exclusive sovereignty in the church, must necessarily produce the same results likewise, as it regards the members of a church—and that an aristocracy, or an exclusive sovereignty, exercised by any particular number of men, will have the same effect in any church or state. It is evident, that just in proportion as power is divided to a people in a state, or to the members in a church, in that proportion the power of a monarchy, or a hierarchy, must be diminished or qualified. There are axioms, or maxims, which in point of fact, however they may be disguised or concealed under forms or words, must enter into the theory and practice of all governments, at all times and in all places; and the one just now stated is among the number. The origin of a government, its nature or its intentions, cannot affect certain principles or truisms. To suppose that there is no analogy between a civil and a religious government, is just as erroneous as to suppose that there may be a sacred and a profane system of arithmetic, or system of numbers by which to estimate religious things, independently of the axioms, that the whole is greater than a part, and that all the parts are equal to the whole. The principles of addition and subtraction may be made as applicable to estimates of ecclesiastical power as to civil power. In both cases, when all is assumed nothing remains; and when any part is granted the whole is so much



gious liberty among mankind? Is it not evident that if there be no legislative liberty in the christian church, there never has been any from the beginning of the world. We purposely avoid all reference to the history of the Catholic Church, or Church of Rome. The only safe ground, it seems to us, is to concede the right of legislative liberty to the members of the church of Christ.

8. But it is within our knowledge that some of the itinerant brethren do hold lay and local representation to be lawful, but not expedient; and the knowledge of this fact seems to justify us in offering a few remarks upon the subject of expediency. Was it heretofore, and is it still inexpedient for any, or all of the priests or ministers of religion who did possess legislative power exclusively, or who still possess it, to yield any portion of it to the professors of religion? But, as no pains have been taken to conceal from us the grounds of the doctrine of expediency, as generally urged against us, we will not evade it. We, therefore, continue to urge the subject of universal experience in reply. All our knowledge of the history of intelligence, morality and religion goes to produce a conviction in our judgments that those qualities of the mind and of the heart, have not flourished most in the absence of all legislative liberty, but the contrary. Nothing, we think, is more susceptible of proof, than that all the great hierarchies, as well as the great monarchies, have been remarkable for the prevalence of ignorance and vice; and, that in almost every country, and in every age, men have improved in knowledge and virtue in proportion to the advancement of legislative liberty among the people in church and state. Was not the Reformation expedient? Would it not have been expedient had it commenced sooner? Now, the Reformation led the way to legislative liberty; and, we put the question with great earnestness to those of our brethren, who are incessantly and emphatically urging the expediency of the exclusive legislative sovereignty of the travelling preachers, from the almost unparalleled success (as they think,) of Methodism, to tell us how much success the most eminent of the missionaries would have in those countries, and those civil and religious governments where legislation among the people is held to be neither lawful nor expedient—in Turkey, for instance, to say nothing of some of the southern parts of Europe?

9. In asking legislative liberty, brethren, for the members and the local preachers, we are fully aware of the many prejudices our petition will have to encounter, and of the



want of analogy between civil and religious liberty; as though men might possess religious liberty of legislation under an exclusive sovereignty, in which all the legislative power is in the hands of the travelling preachers.

6. We hope, brethren, that it will not be deemed intrusive or impertinent in us, to entreat the members of the General Conference, not to substitute or transfer their feelings or imaginations into the place of the legislative liberty for which we petition. We have been induced to make this seemingly strange request from the frequency of the assertion, that we have too much liberty or power already; and, we can conceive of no means by which such an idea could originate in any mind, unless it should have been by too great an ascendancy of feeling or imagination, as we think we have made it clear, that we have no legislative liberty or power at all.

7. It is legislative liberty, brethren, that we and our brethren want; and this liberty, so far as we understand the New Testament, is not forbidden to us by it—nor can we conceive how any portion of that sacred book can be construed by the General Conference, so as to amount to an interdiction of the grant of it on your part. We would fain hope that you will avoid the consequences of saying that we have no right to any portion of legislative liberty in the church of which we are members; but that this right belongs exclusively to the travelling preachers. Upon the subject of right, however, we will take leave to solicit your attention to history. In the oldest civil and religious governments, the records of which are most conspicuous in history, monarchy and hierarchy existed upon a great scale. In ancient Babylon and Egypt, the people were alike deprived of civil and religious legislation. The oldest records of Southern India and Tartary, bear testimony to the same state of things. And the exclusive legislative power of the Druids through ancient Europe, is well known. Had, then, all these priests the right to deprive the people of religious liberty, and was the same common to the kings of those countries, to deprive the people of the liberty of civil legislation? And have the travelling preachers this kind of right in common with them, without any formal grant in the New Testament? The consequences of taking the affirmative of these questions, you must perceive, brethren, are serious, if not alarming. If the right to legislate for religious people, or churches, is common to the priests of all religions and to the ministers of Jesus Christ, how does the gospel improve the state of reli-



ber with the right of challenge in all cases analogous to those wherein it is allowed in the civil jurisprudence of our common country—and as shall plainly and effectually secure to the accused the right of choosing, whether he shall be tried before a committee, or the particular church of which he is a member.

## AN ADDRESS

*To the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church  
throughout the United States.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:

WE presume it is well known to you, that the controversy which agitates the Methodist Episcopal Church, originated with the travelling ministry. Our itinerant brethren disputed among themselves with great interest, on the presiding elder question, many of them contending for an abridgment of the present Episcopal powers of the church, before either the local ministry or the laity, publicly, entered into the investigation. And even now, after the inferior powers of the church have begun to take a lively interest in the subject, it is an indisputable fact, that some of our itinerant brethren are foremost, as active agents in the great cause of reformation.

The first public effort on the part of the laity, to secure to themselves, that christian liberty which is justly due to all the disciples of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was exhibited in the "Wesleyan Repository," after the General Conference of 1820, and continued until the General Conference of 1824.

A variety of petitions were sent up to that Conference, praying for an introduction of the great principles of general and equitable representation. The General Conference answered, "We know no such rights;" "We do not comprehend such privileges." And because the different bodies of petitioners, expressed themselves in different forms of language, and some of them perhaps extended their requests farther than others, the Conference fondly took advantage of this circumstance, to insinuate that there was little or no unanimity amongst them.

In consequence of this, a meeting of Reformers who assembled in the city of Baltimore, near the close of the Ge-



urgent manner in which a plan has been called for from a belief of the difficulty, if not impracticability, of forming one. Independently of any other considerations, we are disposed to avoid the attempt to form a plan, out of deference to the General Conference. We ask for no distinct representation of the local preachers, and only require that the number of lay delegates and local preachers chosen by their joint ballot should be equal to the whole number of the travelling preachers in the General Conference.

10. Recent circumstances, in the highest degree painful to our feelings, induce us to urge upon the General Conference an immediate attention to the third paragraph of the Discipline, section 7, page 91, respecting "endeavouring to sow dissensions," which we are persuaded has been misconstrued; but, whether the General Conference agree with us or not, upon this point, the manner in which it has been used, convinces us that it is liable to great abuse, in its present form. We are greatly alarmed to find brethren assuming the prerogative under said paragraph, to judge of the intentions of men, while prejudice or party feeling is producing high excitement in their minds. We ask for the abolition of that part of the Discipline, inasmuch as we do not clearly perceive how it can be so modified as to avoid a tendency to favour constructive treason—a consequence which cannot be too carefully avoided. All the eminent civilians and jurists agree in opinion respecting the great evil of constructive treason, in every community. Could we suppose that any member of the General Conference labours under any degree of doubt upon this subject, or of the necessity of relying upon the proofs drawn from overt acts only, we would refer him to the British State trials in particular, as well as to the history of jurisprudence generally. This objectionable paragraph, as it now stands in the Book of Discipline, has been made to co-operate, even in the hands of sincere and well-meaning men, who are not apprized of the consequences, so as to produce great injustice and oppression.

Another subject of great importance in the estimation of this Convention, is the invaluable institution of trial by jury, which all experience teaches, can never be a sufficient protection of the accused, without the right of challenge. The principles of justice, sanction us in demanding such a modification of the answer to the question, chap. 2. sec. 7 of Discipline, "How shall an accused member be brought to trial"—as shall plainly and effectually invest the accused mem-



already been violated, which satisfies us that our persevering efforts are essential to the security of religious liberty, as well, perhaps, as for the defence of the great principles of our civil constitution. Our brethren think we are restless spirits, who are actuated by selfish motives, and who are disposed unnecessarily to disturb the peace of society; but in this unbrotherly surmise, we think they do not treat us according to the common demands of justice, much less in conformity with the sacred claims of christian charity. Men who have simply a regard to their own individual advantages, would not be apt to face the long established prejudices of society, and expose themselves to the thunders of the highest ecclesiastical authority, existing any where in Protestant Christendom. Men whose only object is to secure personal comfort from the elements, will not be apt voluntarily to face the greatest violence of the storm.

When has it happened, since the world began, that any improvement has been made in the moral and religious condition of society, without a struggle? And when was a serious effort commenced, with a view to such improvement, that was not violently opposed by the existing civil or ecclesiastical powers of the world, or by both of them together?

The few Reformers who struggled against despotic power through the dark ages, were stigmatized as Heretics, Schismatics, Lollards, Hugonots, or any other name that could excite prejudice through the influence of clerical ingenuity. The Waldenses, Albigenses and other Reformers, had in a manner to retire from the world and hide themselves in corners, to avoid the storm of persecution; Jerome and John Huss were put to death, and many others had cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments, for the testimony which they maintained; their magnanimous efforts, though in a great measure concealed from public observation, prepared the way for the great reformation by Luther, which produced an earthquake in the dark places of the earth, the effects of which will continue and increase unto the end of the world.

The time has now come for the attention of the christian public to be called to the importance of liberal principles in church government, as well as in divinity. This is particularly the case in our country. The attention of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher was not especially directed to this subject: they had other demands upon them sufficient to occupy all their time. The English Methodists, after the death of Mr. Wesley, made an earnest demand for religious freedom; and



neral Conference, besides establishing a new periodical, that the investigation might be continued, resolved to institute Union Societies to concentrate their views, out of which grew an arrangement, to hold a general delegated Convention, to prepare a memorial, which should express the sentiments of all Reformers on the continent. This Convention is now assembled, and now see proper to address their Methodist brethren throughout the United States.

Opposition to all our efforts has advanced with increasing violence to the present hour, and in the same proportion as the cause of Reform has advanced. Ministers have been suspended, members have been arraigned for trial, and an extraordinary combination, systematically organized, to break up the Union Society of the city of Baltimore, and all this has been done, merely because they have advocated in the Mutual Rights, a lay representation in the legislative department of the church.

These facts are calculated greatly to increase conviction in every thoughtful mind, that we did not begin to call for a reformation until there was an imperious necessity for the struggle. If such vehement acts of violence on the part of our opponents, do not prove the indispensable necessity for an abridgment of their power, what species of proof in nature, would be sufficient to produce conviction?

It is our duty, however, to pursue the subject by way of humble and respectful petition, as we commenced it: if our rulers forget what is due to themselves, as professed followers of the meek and lowly Saviour of mankind, it would ill become us to follow so unworthy an example. If they are determined to meet all our arguments with blows, we must leave the responsibility with themselves;—remembering that truth and gentleness, and patient love, were the only weapons used by the great Captain of our salvation.

Our opposing brethren have used political management, to keep the subject in controversy from getting hold of the public attention. They have used threats to intimidate the fearful. Some of them have withdrawn from the cause of reform, and seemed to manifest increasing hostility against it, in exact proportion as evidence in its favour advanced, and became unanswerable. They have raised the strong arm of authority against ministers and members, for no other reason but because they were Reformers: and when they could produce no shadow of law for their proceedings, they have boldly marched on their course, without law. These facts prove that our rights are not only in *danger*; but have



ignorance and inconsideration. One of the most indubitable axioms in all theology is, that THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS WILL DO NO PERSON ANY HARM, AND THERE IS NO DANGER WHATEVER, THAT IT SHOULD BE TOO WELL UNDERSTOOD. In ten thousand instances the truth has been concealed under pretence of guarding against error; and millions of mankind have been kept in a state of degrading and destructive ignorance, to preserve them from heresy! It is high time for christians to make an effort, to deliver the human family from such injurious, enslaving, and stupifying absurdities. If the truth will do no person any harm, in the name of God, let every person have the privilege to find the truth, as perfectly as he can. If, through pride, or any other unhallowed passion, an individual, or any number of them, should run into delusion, in attempting to find the truth, the church has an undoubted right to interfere, according to christian principles; but let her distinctly understand her sacred obligation to become qualified, by a course of christian candour and attention, to decide correctly when her members are in reality departing from the truth; and not allow herself, through ignorance and bigotry, to arrest the righteous progress of intelligence upon the absurd claims of her own infallibility.

That there is danger of injuring society by injudicious efforts to bring about a *hurried* reformation, we allow: the community ought not to move in any course of practical operations, only as intelligent conviction shall point out the way. We feel no disposition to hurry our Methodist brethren into any premature determinations: all we are at present disposed to insist on is, the rationality and christian obligation they are under to give the subject a fair and persevering examination. If we are mistaken in our views we sincerely wish to be set right; but we think it impossible for any people to be qualified to judge of the matters in dispute, who neglect to examine into the subject, or who refuse to give an impartial hearing to both sides of the controversy. We, therefore, solicit our brethren in church fellowship, and think we have a reasonable and religious right to solicit them, calmly and patiently to examine this subject before they allow themselves to make up a decisive and final determination. For them to conclude hastily, that we are their enemies, and the enemies of the church, without properly inquiring for themselves, is a course of conduct which is utterly unfair towards us, and in the end must be extensively injurious to themselves.



the ministry made such concessions as have, in a great measure, quieted the Societies. The same views are now rapidly advancing in this country; and the principles of civil liberty have had a greater influence, perhaps, in giving rise to the inquiry, both in England and America, than any other cause. Our opponents, aware of this, are now importunate to have it believed that there "*is no analogy* between ecclesiastical governments and civil institutions." They want this proposition supported that they may remain in quiet possession of the maxim, that however self-evident the principles are, on which civil liberty is founded, yet the *church* has an "indefeasible right" to the exercise of despotic power. This maxim prevailed in past ages, until the power of the church actually predominated over the civil authority of kings and emperors.

In the days of Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors, the spirit of persecution was restrained, in some degree, by the civil power: Mr. Wesley was known to be a warm advocate for the government of his country; and he every where exhorted his societies to honour the king. The clerical authorities were also reluctant to commence an open persecution, because he was an ordained minister of their communion, of high standing, and constantly insisted, that he was only reviving the neglected doctrines of the church of England. Hence, opposition had to be carried on by various modes of slander, and by the violence of lawless mobs. In this hemisphere reformers are also protected by the government of the country. But attempts have been made, and plans formed, to put us down by a course of clerical censure and expulsion. How far this will be successful, or what other modes of opposition will be adopted, remains for the future to develop.

Whatever form the spirit of opposition and proscription may assume, its design and tendency are the same, from the beginning to the end of time. Persecutors in all ages of the world have one design in view; and that is, *to hinder the truth from coming to light*, lest its general prevalence should deprive them of some of their *power*, their *influence*, their *fame*, their *false security*, or their *pleasure*.

That the church has a right to guard her members against opinions and practices which are contrary to the gospel is freely and fully admitted; but it is her sacred duty to inquire for the truth with all attention and candour, that she may be qualified to judge correctly when her members are going astray; and that she may not blindly hinder them from progressing in the way of truth and justice, through ig-



community in a state of deplorable and increasing ignorance? If not, let them be entreated, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to make themselves acquainted with our views, before they have the rashness to condemn them.

Some pretend, that our plan of bringing about a reformation is altogether improper; and that we never can succeed in this way. One says, "You never can reform the church after your fashion: but you may rend it; and have cause after all to lament your fatal success." Now we would respectfully ask in what way was the church ever reformed, but by bringing forward the evidence of truth, to convince her of her errors? We must honestly declare, that we are utterly at a loss to conceive of any other way by which the church can be reformed, in any period of the world's duration, but the same way, in substance, which we have pursued. If our brethren can point out a better way, we will sincerely thank them for their instructions; but until they give us new light upon this subject, we feel conscientiously bound to persevere in the course we have adopted.

Our Union Societies and conventions may be objected to: these have been instituted for no other object but to embody our sentiments, and to act together advisedly. It is our duty to be *united*; and if our ingenious and politic opponents attempt to scatter us to the ends of the earth, it is probable that these societies will save us eventually from ruin.

The late proscriptions and persecutions demonstrate that they were not instituted at too early a period. It has been attempted to deprive some of our brethren of the liberty of speech and of the press. They have attempted to wrest it from us by various stratagems, and have at length commenced a course of open violence. They have arrested our preachers and people, and dragged them before their church tribunals, for no other reason but because they supported the efforts that are now making, to bring about a better state of things in our ecclesiastical government and administration. They may cover their designs as they please; but this is the real ground of all their violent opposition to reformers, in the Baltimore city station. Scenes of oppression like these appeal at once to the tenderest feelings of our nature, and to the dearest interests of our souls; say not that it is merely an abuse of power under a strong excitement, and will be corrected. Would to heaven it were so—but we are satisfied that it is not. It is the natural operation of the present state of things. We would, therefore, call upon you, brethren, in the name, and in the behalf of our common Zion, and in the name of



We entreat our brethren, therefore for their own sake, as well as for ours, calmly and deliberately to inquire into the real truth of the case, before they allow themselves to make up any absolute conclusion. Let them consider that it is high time the human family should solemnly weigh the matter, how often mankind have seriously injured themselves by a passionate and dogmatical determination to spurn from them the mild appeals of evidence, and the earnest expostulations of christian benevolence. We do not wish our Methodist brethren to be governed by our authority, or to act, but upon the convictions of their own intelligence; but we sincerely wish them all to be at due pains to inform their minds upon the subject, that they may be qualified to act as men of rational understandings, and not as passionate and obstinate children, who know not what they say nor whereof they affirm. If we are mistaken let our beloved brethren kindly aid us in detecting the delusion; but let them not commence a course of furious opposition before they know what it is for which we are contending.

Some, indeed, have objected that we have not told the public what it is we are calling for from our church authorities; but this objection originates in ignorance, or in something worse. We have been labouring with great attention and perseverance, to put the public in possession of our views as fast as we can. We have not, indeed, given a full and unsupported outline of our *plan*; because we think it far more advantageous, both to ourselves and others, to *prove* our propositions as we advance in the inquiry, rather than to give a catalogue of simple, undefined principles, to excite the tumults of ignorance, and the storms of passion, before the subject can be fairly and rationally investigated. If our objectors were really desirous the truth should appear, and nothing else, they would be willing the subject should be examined in any way best calculated to bring the truth before the intelligence of the public.

It is far from being our intention to raise disturbances and commotions in society; but we think the members of our church universally, ought to give a candid hearing to our reasons for desiring a reformation. Can our beloved brethren prevail on themselves to believe for a moment, that any advantages will result to themselves or their posterity, by listless indifference, or by a blind opposition to principles which they have never examined? Can they believe God is honoured, or man benefitted, by that inconsiderate bigotry which refuses truth a hearing, and which tends to keep the



very apt, let his professions be what they may, to do the cause of reform more harm than good.

It has been urged by our opponents that we cannot, or do not state what it is we wish to accomplish. But the great principles for which we contend are neither prolix nor intricate. They are set forth in the memorial. Those are what are deemed important to the prosperity of the church, and for these we are represented as aiming to overturn the Methodist church! Will our opponents say plainly, that a church constitution, founded on social justice and just representation, and pure christianity, is so inconsistent with Methodism, that the existence of the former will inevitably produce the destruction of the latter? Will they say our episcopal government is so totally contrary to justice and christianity, that their essential principles cannot be constitutionally introduced into it, without an "entire revolution?" If they are unwilling for such a constitution to exist in the church, it must be because they wish the bishops and the General Conference to have the privilege of doing as they please, without sufficient checks to restrain their proceedings. To put a just constitutional check upon the episcopacy, or upon the legislative power, as organized at present, it seems, would be totally to revolutionize the government, and hazard the very existence of Methodism.

The question is a very simple one:—shall the executive and legislative power of the church be restrained by the principles of justice and christianity, established in an authoritative constitution? or shall their *own will* alone be all the constitution that is to restrain them? This is the simple and plain state of the case; and let not the community be infatuated with any equivocation. If our brethren believe there is no alternative, but for the episcopacy to retain its high prerogatives, *be absolute*, and for the General Conference to continue to be an independent aristocracy, or for the very foundations of Methodism to be destroyed, let them own it in intelligible language; that mankind may know how to appreciate their alarming representations, concerning our "revolutionary project." To call for the least check, upon either their legislative or executive power, it seems, is in their estimation a radical abandonment of the whole plan of "old Methodism!"

That such a sovereignty is dangerous, and destructive to the dearest interests of human beings, has been proved by the experience of mankind, for more than twelve hundred years. We therefore entreat our Methodist brethren,



every thing that is dear to christian peace and charity, to express your sentiments of disapprobation of those acts of proscription and persecution, so dishonourable to Methodism, and so deeply afflictive to many pious minds.

It is also urged by our opponents, that our labours as reformers are like the efforts of men beating the air, inasmuch as it is impossible in the nature of things, for us ever to be successful in such an enterprise. This is an objection on which our old side brethren delight to dwell: they say we never can succeed; "the effort will be abortive;" and after a while we shall have to abandon the enterprise with shame, and "return to due submission." All this is said with a view to discourage us, and to bring about the very state of things, which they predict. For the more reformers are discouraged, the more their efforts will be paralyzed; hence, prophecies of their ultimate failure abound through all the land. Some who call themselves reformers, are frequently heard harping upon the same string. But we may justly conclude, that any man who does so, is either too ignorant of human nature to be a good reformer, or is really in his heart an opposer of reform. No good reformer will try to discourage his brethren, and thereby weaken their energies. He will say, on the contrary, "let us go up and possess the land, for we are fully able." Suppose you had heard a man urging arguments, from human nature, and from the actual state of human affairs, to convince the apostles that their enterprise to evangelize the world was utterly hopeless:—would you not have taken him for an opposer of christianity? Let our half-hearted reformers seriously consider this question; and let them make up their minds to take a consistent stand, on one side or the other.

A man of principle will be very little governed by anticipations of future success, in one way or another; for it is a great principle of practical christianity, that every man should do his duty, and leave consequences to the superintending care of the Almighty. A conscientious reformer will say in his heart, is it the *truth* for which we are contending? are we aiming to promote that which is *right*, and which is founded on the pure gospel of our blessed Redeemer? then it is my sacred duty to be faithful and firm to the end of my life, however the cause of reform may be treated in the church, or in the world around me. And any man who has such a superficial view of the subject, as to regard the whole as a trivial affair, as a system of mere *church politics*, that may be changed as occasion may require, will be



And that six members of the church, residing in North Carolina, have been expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

From the testimony before the committee, it does not appear that any charges of immorality, or of dissent from the christian doctrines of the church, as set forth in the Articles of Religion, and the General Rules of the societies, which, as asserted in the circular of the last General Conference, "constitute to each member, distinctively, a constitution," were alleged, or even intimated, but, on the contrary, disavowed, as forming any grounds of dissatisfaction with the suspended local preachers, or the tried and expelled members, either in this city, or in North Carolina, in a single case.

From the evidence before your committee, it appears, that the aforesaid local preachers have been suspended, and the lay-members tried, and some of them expelled, purely on the grounds of their holding dissent from, and publishing their objections to some parts of the form of our church government, and its administration. The committee do not deem it necessary to exhibit before the Convention, in detail, the particulars of these trials, as the committee has not been able to obtain any information, contradicting the printed reports of these trials, in the hands of most, if not all the members of this Convention.

The committee, after having carefully reviewed facts and circumstances, under the best lights they have, do advise and recommend, that this Convention should expressly disavow all intentions of forming a government within a government, or in anywise to obstruct or influence the regular and legitimate exercise and execution of discipline; and, that this Convention recommend to all their reforming brethren, not to interfere, or intermeddle in any manner, with any tri-

cond specifications are SUSTAINED! Mr. Hanson has sent each layman, on whose case the committee have reported, a letter, a part of which is as follows, viz:—"The committee appointed to investigate the charges and specifications against you, as a *member* of the *Union Society*, have, by an unanimous decision, found you *guilty*." "You must, therefore, plainly perceive that the only ground on which expulsion from the church can be avoided, is an abandonment of the *UNION SOCIETY*; with assurances that you will give no aid in future to any publication or measure, calculated to cast reproach upon our ministers and members. Be good enough to answer, in writing, the following plain and simple questions:—First, Will you withdraw, *forthwith*, from the *Union Society*?—Second, Will you, in future, withhold your aid from such publications and measures as are calculated to cast reproach upon our ministers, and produce a breach of union among our members? Your answer will be expected in the course of four or five days."

November 27, 1827.



throughout the United States, to look the subject fully in the face—to examine with calm and candid attention for themselves, and to be resolved, like men and christians, that neither the blind impulse of prejudice, nor the intimidations of authority, shall hinder them from reading the Mutual Rights, and whatever else they can find, calculated to give them a just view of the reasons on which our claims are founded.

We have not been aiming to “rend” the church; we have been striving to *prevent* such a calamity. We are still striving to prevent it; and sincerely wish to continue peaceable members to our lives’ end; but our “rational faculties must be untrammelled,” and we must maintain our right, “to search after truth, and to promulgate it, in any way we may judge most expedient.” If our itinerant brethren demand of us to sacrifice this privilege, we are resolved, that we will not yield to their demand. If they are determined to expel us for not renouncing this essential duty of true christians, we must submit to it with patience; but at the same time we feel authorized to summon them to answer for their conduct, before his august tribunal, who said, “*Call no man your father upon earth; for one is your father who is in heaven:—and be not ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ: and all ye are brethren.*”

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## REPORT

*Of the Committee appointed to inquire into the alleged grounds of the recent trials, &c.*

THE committee appointed to inquire and report on the alleged grounds of the trial and suspension of several local preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, residing in the city of Baltimore and elsewhere; and, of the alleged grounds of trial of several lay-members of the said church, beg leave to report, That, in conformity to their instructions, they have ascertained that eleven local ministers and preachers, residents of Baltimore, have been suspended from their ministerial functions, as ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And, that some twenty members of the same church, also residing in Baltimore, have been tried, but no verdict has yet been given in their cases.\*

\* Since the foregoing was put to press, the committee appointed by the preacher to try the cases of the laymen, have reported, that the first and se-



the objects of the preceding recommendatory measures are, that in the system of trial and expulsion now commenced against reformers, they, the reformers, do not consider themselves the aggressors, that they are acting only on the defensive, and that so soon as the preachers and the old side members leave the reformers in the quiet possession and enjoyment of their church privileges, and restore those preachers and members who have been expelled or suspended on account of their having been members of Union Societies, or aiding in the cause of reform, the preceding recommendatory measures cease to operate.

The committee would further recommend, that to prevent impositions upon the reforming brethren, and especially to prevent scandal to the gospel of God, being caused in the name of Methodism, all cases of trial, suspension, and expulsion from the Methodist Episcopal Church, of reformers of good moral character, and of acknowledged orthodoxy—the alleged grounds of the proceedings, should be carefully examined, fairly and clearly stated, and confirmed by members of our church, or other citizens of unexceptionable character, and forwarded to the corresponding committee of the Union Society of Baltimore, whose duty it shall be to lay all such communications before the said society, for the purpose of having them registered in a book of records, to be kept for these purposes, or to be published, or otherwise disposed of, as that society may deem best.

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## APPENDIX.

The revising and publishing committee have been handed by brethren, the following intelligence from absent delegates.

1. A letter from W. B. Evans states, that he was detained by high-water, and also mentions the death of the Rev. David McMasters, President of Union Society, Mt. Pleasant, Ohio; and further says, the last energies of his mind were employed in the good cause of reform. Also states, "We are prepared to acquiesce in what the Convention may do, and to stand or to fall with our brethren in this good cause."

2. Brother Towler writes as follows:—

*Green county, Ohio, November 3, 1827.*

"The propriety of an apology for not attending the Convention, was suggested to me a few days since.



al, or excommunication of any one by the constituted authorities of the church, for established facts of immorality of conduct, or confirmed heterodoxy of doctrines, as the latter are contained in the Articles of Religion, or in the General Rules of the Societies.

The committee further advise and recommend, that in all cases of trial, suspension, or expulsion of a local preacher, or a lay-member of our church, for any other causes than immorality, or heterodoxy, as above stated, but merely because such persons use, or have used lawful means of inquiry and imparting knowledge, for the purposes of obtaining the liberty of representation of the lay-members and the local preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the legislative department of its government; then, and in all such cases, our reforming brethren are in duty bound to render all the assistance in their power to such persons as may be persecuted on these grounds; and, to let all men know, that we still esteem such, brethren beloved; and, that, however others may deem them to be heathens and publicans, they are highly entitled to, and shall receive our constant aid and most affectionate regards; and that they should not suffer any of these things to move them from the pure hopes and duties of their holy calling, but still hold fast faith and a good conscience, manifesting to the church and to the world, that they know how to be consistent and courageous sufferers in the cause of Christ, against ministerial supremacy and domination, over his body, the church, of which he alone is the supreme and divine head.

And that the Convention earnestly and affectionately recommend, that in cases of expulsions from the church for professions of the principles of Methodist Reformers, the individuals so expelled, form themselves into Union Societies, which societies so formed, shall be recognised by all other Union Societies—and where an individual shall be expelled, where there are no societies, and none can be formed, that all such individuals be advised to unite with the nearest Union Society, even though the nearest Union Society should be five hundred or more miles from the residence of such individuals. If entire Union Societies be expelled, the members thereof, are advised to continue united under the General Rules of John and Charles Wesley, and in christian fellowship continue the use among them, of all the christian ordinances, under the superintendence of such ministers as are friendly to reform in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

And the committee advise that the Convention distinctly express, in order that it may be universally understood, that



REPLY OF  
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1828  
TO THE MEMORIAL OF  
THE REFORMERS.

*the Meth. Episc. Ch., II)*  
(From Bangs' History of ~~Methodism~~)

The memorial was presented, read, and referred to a committee, and the following report, drawn up by the late Bishop Emory, and unanimously adopted by the conference, will show the result:—

“The committee to whom were referred certain petitions and memorials, for and against a direct lay and local representation in the General Conference, submit the following report:—

“Of those which propose this revolution in our economy, that which has been received from a convention of certain local preachers and lay members, held in the city of Baltimore in November last, is presumed to embody the

\* All these matters were set in a just point of light soon after these trials were closed, in a pamphlet which was published in the early part of the year 1828, entitled “A Narrative and Defence,” under the signatures of the prosecuting committee and the preacher in charge, the Rev. Mr. Hanson. This “Narrative and Defence,” being supported by ample documentary testimony, is entitled to credit; and hence it is from this able defence of the authorities of the Church, and their proceedings in the cases at issue, that I have drawn the principal facts contained in the above sketch of this affair. From the Discipline afterward adopted by the “Reformers” I have taken some facts respecting their secession and subsequent transactions.



"You are hereby informed that I remain the same as to my sentiments on the contemplated changes by the reformers in our church polity; and the late proceedings against the reformers in Baltimore, is additional evidence that the ruling authorities of our church have departed much further from the spirit of the gospel than I had ever conceived of before. It would gratify me much, could I be with you on the 15th inst., but circumstances beyond my control forbid it. May Heaven smile on the Convention, to introduce into our persecuting church a better order of things, is the ardent prayer of your affectionate brother in Christ. JAMES TOWLER."

3. Information from the Rev. Mr. Richman, stating that affliction in his family prevented his attendance on the Convention.

4. A letter from Dr. Bestwick has been received since the rising of the Convention, in which he assigns the state of his health, and the nature of his business and engagements, as the causes of his absence. He, at the same time, expresses great regret on account of his inability to attend the Convention, and his earnest wish for the success of our cause.

5. Brother Stephen Bell writes as follows:—

*November 3, 1827.*

"I will say to you, and the brethren composing the Convention, that a combination of circumstances beyond my control have prevented my attendance on the Convention—my prayers are with you, and may Heaven's blessings attend your efforts to bring about a better state of things in our church, of which I have long seen the necessity, and more so since I have received the last number of Mutual Rights, and discover the persecuting spirit of the power-party in Baltimore. But I hope our persecuted brethren will stand firm.—Yours, in the bonds of a peaceful gospel."

The Hon. Judge Hopper, writes, "That in consequence of the illness of his wife, he was prevented from attending the Convention" Also, that his best wishes were with the objects of the Convention.

The want of room prevents more numerous and extensive extracts.

THE END.



ted? We could not have believed them capable of so strange a position, had they not declared the opinion as prevailing among themselves, 'that the extension of the principle of representation to the members and the local preachers of the Church, by the General Conference, in compliance with a petition of this kind, *at this conjuncture of time*, would do more toward conciliating good feeling, restoring lost confidence among brethren, and confirming wavering minds, on all sides, than any other measure which can be adopted.'

"Now *we* 'speak advisedly' when we say, that, in our judgment, such a measure, 'at this conjuncture of time,' would have a precisely contrary effect. The ministers assembled in General Conference, coming so recently from all parts of the great field of our missionary labors, and having had, throughout its whole extent, free and constant intercourse both with traveling and local preachers, and also with our lay members, are, certainly, at least as well prepared as the memorialists could have been to form a correct judgment on this point; and their calm and deliberate judgment is clearly and unhesitatingly as above stated. This we believe, too, to be the true state of the question, after it has been so zealously discussed, on the side of the memorialists, for now nearly eight years; during almost the whole of which time, until very recently, the discussion has been conducted almost exclusively by their own writers.

"We are aware that it has been assumed, by some at least of those writers, that this repugnance to the change proposed, on the part of so great a proportion both of our local preachers and lay members, to say nothing of the itinerant preachers, is the result of ignorance or want of intellect. This we conceive to be at least not a very modest assumption. Our opinion, on the contrary, is, while we freely admit that there are men of respectable



general views of those who desire this change, and the chief arguments on which they rely. In framing a reply, in the midst of the various and pressing business of a General Conference, it cannot be reasonably expected that we should enter into minute details. Our remarks, of necessity, must be confined to a few leading topics, in a condensed, yet, we trust, an intelligible form.

"As to the claim of *right* to the representation contended for, if it be a right which the claimants are entitled to *demand*, it must be either a natural or an acquired right. If a natural right, then, being founded in nature, it must be common to men, as men. The foundation of rights in ecclesiastical bodies, in our opinion, rests on a different basis. If it be alleged to be an acquired right, then it must have been acquired either in consequence of becoming Christians or of becoming Methodists. If the former, it devolves on the claimants to prove that this right is conferred by the Holy Scriptures, and that they impose on us the corresponding obligation to grant the claim. That it is not 'forbidden' in the New Testament is not sufficient; for neither is the contrary 'forbidden.' Or if the latter be alleged, namely, that it has been acquired in consequence of becoming Methodists, then it must have been either by some conventional compact, or by some obligatory principle in the economy of Methodism, to which, as then organized, the claimants voluntarily attached themselves. Neither of these, we believe, either has been or can be shown. And until one at least of these be shown, the claim of *right*, as such, cannot, we think, have been sustained.

"But do the memorialists mean to say that they are entitled to their claim, as a matter of right, against the judgment and the voice of a confessedly very large majority of their brethren, both of the ministry traveling and local, and also of the lay members? or that in these circumstances, on any ground, the claim ought to be admit-



mony of Methodism, to spread Scriptural holiness over these and other lands.

"The memorialists, we know, disavow any intention or desire to impair those energies, or to injure this system. Be it so. They can, however, only speak for themselves. They know not what may be the views of those who may come after them. And, in any event, our argument is, that the change proposed would, in its very nature, and from the inevitable connections of causes and effects, tend, gradually perhaps, yet not the less uncontrollably, to the results which we have mentioned.

"We know also that it has been insinuated that we adhere to the continuance of our present polity from motives of personal interest. For protection against such unkindness and injustice we rest on the good sense and candor of the community. It cannot but be well known that our present economy bears with a peculiar severity upon the personal and domestic comforts of the itinerant ministry. And even an enemy could scarcely fail to admit that, were we really ambitious of worldly interest, and of personal ease, and domestic comfort, we might have the discernment to perceive that the surest way to effect these objects would be to effect the changes proposed, and thus to prepare the way for the enjoyment of similar advantages, in these respects, to those now enjoyed by the settled ministry of other churches. And, indeed, were such a change effected, and should we even still continue itinerant, considering that, from the necessity of things, our wealthy and liberal friends would most generally be selected as delegates, we do not doubt that the change proposed might probably tend to increase our temporal comforts. We think this the more probable, because, if such a direct representation of the laity were admitted, ~~their~~ constituents might ultimately become obliged, by some positive provisions, fully to make up and pay whatever allowances



information and intelligence who desire the change, that there are, nevertheless, very many more, of at least equally respectable information and intelligence, who are opposed to it, whether on the ground of right, of consistent practicability, or of utility.

“With regard to our local brethren particularly, it is our decided judgment that the privileges and advantages in which they have participated, in this country, have much rather exceeded than fallen short of what was contemplated in their institution, in the original economy of Methodism, as founded by the venerable Wesley, either in Europe or in America. We cannot but regret to perceive, that the addition of privilege to privilege seems only to have had the effect of exciting some of our brethren to claim still more and more; and now to begin to demand them as matters of positive and inherent right. We are happy to be able to say ‘some’ only of our local brethren; for of the great body, even of themselves, we believe better things, though we thus speak. If, indeed, our members generally are tired of our missionary and itinerant system, and wish a change, then we could not be surprised if they should desire to introduce into our councils local men, whose views, and feelings, and interests, in the very nature and necessity of things, could not fail to be more local than those of itinerant men. And if to so powerful a local influence should be added, as would be added, the tendencies and temptations to locality which, in despite of all our better convictions, too often exist among ourselves, from domestic and personal considerations of a pressing character, we are free to confess our fears of the dangers to our itinerant economy which, in our opinion, could not fail, in time, to be the result. Now the preservation of the great itinerant system, unimpaired, in all its vital energies, we do conscientiously believe to be essential to the accomplishment of the grand original design of the eco-



authority to enact laws to affect either life or limb, to touch the persons or to tax the property of our members, they ought, unquestionably, to be directly represented among us. But they know we do not. We certainly, then, exercise no civil legislation. As to the moral code, we are subject, equally with themselves, to one only Lord. We have no power to add to, to take from, to alter, or to modify a single item of his statutes. Whether laymen or ministers be the authorized expounders and administrators of those laws, we can confidently rely on the good Christian sense of the great body of our brethren to judge. These well know, also, that whatever expositions of them we apply to others, the same are applied equally to ourselves, and, in some instances, with peculiar strictness.

“No man is obliged to receive *our doctrines* merely because *we* believe and teach them, nor unless they have his own cordial assent. Neither is any man obliged to submit himself to what *we* believe to be the *moral discipline* of the gospel, and our duty to enforce, unless he believes it to be so also. In this view, at least, it cannot require any great share of either intelligence or candor to perceive some difference between our spiritual and pastoral oversight and the absolute sway of the ancient ‘Druids,’ and of the despots of ‘Babylon and Egypt,’ and of ‘India and Tartary.’ The subjects of their lawless power became so not by choice, but by birth. Neither had they the means, whatever might have been their desire, of escaping its grasp. Even in more modern days, and under governments comparatively free, the right of expatriation, without the consent of the government, has been denied. We do not subscribe to this doctrine, if applied to either church or state. The right of ecclesiastical expatriation, from any one branch of the Christian church to any other which may be preferred, for grave causes, we have never denied. Nor can we keep, nor are we desirous to keep, any man



might be made to the ministry; which allowances, in this event, might also more properly acquire the nature of a civil obligation. At present our economy knows no such thing. The great Head of the church himself has imposed on us the duty of preaching the gospel, of administering its ordinances, and of maintaining its moral discipline among those over whom the Holy Ghost, in these respects, has made us overseers. Of these also, namely, of gospel doctrines, ordinances, and moral discipline, we do believe that the divinely instituted ministry are the divinely authorized expounders; and that the duty of maintaining them in their purity, and of not permitting our ministrations, in these respects, to be authoritatively controlled by others, does rest upon us with the force of a moral obligation, in the due discharge of which our consciences are involved. It is on this ground that we resist the temptations of temporal advantage which the proposed changes hold out to us.

“On this point we beg, however, that no one may either misunderstand or misrepresent us. We neither claim nor seek to be ‘lords over God’s heritage.’ In the sense of this passage, there is but one Lord and one Lawgiver. We arrogate no authority to enact any laws of our own, either of moral or of civil force. Our commission is to preach the gospel, and to enforce the moral discipline, established by the one Lawgiver, by those spiritual powers vested in us, as subordinate pastors, who watch over souls as they that must give account to the chief Shepherd. We claim no strictly legislative powers, although we grant that the terms ‘legislature’ and ‘legislative’ have been sometimes used even among ourselves. In a proper sense, however, they are not strictly applicable to our General Conference. A mistake on this point has probably been the source of much erroneous reasoning, and of some consequent dissatisfaction. Did we claim any



posed, in connection with an essentially itinerant system, is untried. Its results, at best, must be problematical; and, in our opinion, there is no prospect of gain that can justify the hazard.

“With regard to our local brethren particularly, they have themselves explicitly said, that they ‘ask for no distinct representation of the local preachers.’ So far as this question is concerned, therefore, by their own consent, they can only be regarded as amalgamated with the laity: and our lay brethren, we apprehend, would not readily consent to its being considered in any other light.

“Were we disposed to retort the insinuation of sinister personal motives, how easy would it be for us to suggest that some of our local brethren who have deserted the itinerant field, (perhaps from its toils and privations,) and others who have never been pleased to leave *domestic* comforts and temporal pursuits to encounter its labors and sacrifices, may be so zealous in accomplishing the proposed change in order to cut up, or to bring down, the itinerant system to a nearer approximation to their temporal convenience. So that, in time, they might come, without the sacrifices at present necessary, to participate both in the pastoral charge, and, alas! in the envied pittance of those who now devote themselves wholly to the work, and are absolutely dependent for daily subsistence on the mere voluntary contributions of those whom they serve: (a check on their power indeed!) Such an imputation would be quite as kind and as true as many of those which are so liberally heaped on us. This course of argumentation, however, we deem unworthy of Christian brethren, and shall leave it for those who think their cause requires it. The man who can believe, or who can endeavor to persuade others, that we adhere to our present itinerant system for the sake of personal convenience, ease, or interest, or with the view of benefiting our poste-



subject to our authority one moment longer than it is his own pleasure. We advert to this topic with great reluctance, but the memorialists compel us. If they will cease to compare us to despots, to whom we bear no analogy, we shall cease to exhibit the obvious distinction. Till then it is our duty to repel the imputation, so obstructive of our ministry. Expatriation, either civil or ecclesiastical, if we may continue this application of the term, may be painful, and attended with sacrifices. But we should certainly think it preferable to perpetual internal war. If our brethren can live in peace with us, in Christian bonds, we shall sincerely rejoice, and be cordially happy in their society and fellowship. But we entreat them not to keep us embroiled in perpetual strife. Our united energies are needed for higher and nobler purposes.

"We have been repeatedly told, in effect, that the doctrines, the moral discipline, and the peculiar Christian privileges of class meetings, love feasts, &c., in the Methodist Episcopal Church, are approved and esteemed, by the various memorialists themselves, above those of any other branch of the Christian church. Does it not then clearly follow, by their own admission, that, with all the faults of our government, this state of things has been preserved and maintained under the peculiar administrations of our itinerant system? And who will undertake to say that, under a gracious Providence, which has thus led us on, this has not, in a great measure at least, been the result of the distinctness of our polity from that of most other churches? And who will undertake to say that, were the changes proposed adopted, we should not gradually, though at first perhaps almost imperceptibly, begin to go the way of others? We speak to Methodists. They will judge what we say. The moral results of our past and present polity have been tried. Its fruits are before us, and confessed by the world. The experiment pro-



Pennsylvania, seven ; Virginia, ten ; and Maryland, twenty-nine. Now that convention had been urgently called, by repeated public advertisements, and was expected to be held but a few days, to discuss subjects represented as of great importance and deep interest. Liberal invitations were given, and comfortable and free accommodations pledged. Yet, notwithstanding the novelty of the assembly, the pleasantness of the season, and other inviting circumstances, a very few more than one half of the whole number appointed attended. And had it required two-thirds of that number to constitute a quorum, as in our General Conference, after all their labor and expense, no business could have been done, for there would have been no quorum. Of the number that did attend, too, it will be perceived that a majority of the whole were from the state of Maryland, within which the convention was held ; and, including the neighboring District of Columbia, a decisive majority. This exhibits a practical proof that, were a lay delegation even admitted, the consequence would be, that the extremities of our Church would not be, in fact, represented at all, but would be subjected to the overwhelming control of those within the vicinity of the seat of the conference ; a state of things which, we believe, is not desirable. This may serve also, perhaps, to account, in some measure, for the great zeal which some of our brethren have exhibited in this cause, particularly in the state of Maryland and the adjoining district, and in the city of Baltimore, where the General Conference has usually been held. Were it established that the General Conference should always be held in St. Louis or New-Orleans, or any other remote part, we cannot but think that the zeal of some, in that case, would probably be very much abated. Even they would scarcely be willing to travel so great a distance, at so much ex-



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ity more than the posterity of our brethren, may be pitied, but he places himself beyond the reach either of reasoning or of rebuke.

"The memorialists were sensible that 'a plan' of their proposed changes had been urgently called for, and seem to have been well aware that rational and conscientious men could not feel free to enter upon so great a revolution, in a system of such extent and of such connections, without a plan, clearly and frankly developed, and bearing the marks of having been carefully and judiciously devised. The memorialists indeed say, that, 'independently of other considerations,' they were 'disposed to avoid the attempt to form a plan, out of deference to the General Conference.' It would have been more satisfactory to us to have known what those 'other considerations' were. From some other circumstances, we cannot but apprehend that they probably had more influence in keeping back the expose of 'a plan' than the one mentioned here, of—'deference to the General Conference.' On our part, we frankly confess ourselves incompetent to form any satisfactory plan, on any principles which we believe to be equal and efficient, and consistent with the energies and greatest usefulness of our extended missionary system. We think it, therefore, unreasonable, at least, to ask of us to contrive a 'plan.'

"So far as we can judge from any experiment that has been made, in Europe or in America, we cannot perceive any great advantages which could be promised to the Church from the proposed change. Nor has the late convention in Baltimore afforded to our understanding any additional argument for its efficient practicability. Agreeably to the journal of that convention, one hundred persons were appointed to attend it, of whom fifty-seven only did attend, namely, from the state of New-York, one; North Carolina, two; Ohio, four; District of Columbia, four;



suppress free inquiry, and with denying to our ministers and members the liberty of speech and of the press. Our feelings, under such reiterated and widely circulated charges, would tempt us to repel them with strong expressions. If reviled, however, we are resolved not to revile again. But the charge we wholly disavow. Our ministers and members, of every class, are entitled to the full liberty of speech and of the press, equally with any other citizens of the United States, subject solely to the restrictions and responsibilities imposed by the laws of the land, by the obligations of Christianity, and by the existing regulations under which we are voluntarily associated, as Methodists and as Methodist ministers. The rule in our Discipline, 'sec. 7, p. 91,' (new edition, p. 88,) of which some of the memorialists complain, never was intended (and we are not aware that it has at any time been officially so construed) to suppress such freedom of inquiry, or to deny such liberty of speech and of the press; provided such inquiry be conducted, and such liberty be used, in a manner consistent with the above-mentioned obligations. The design of the rule was to guard the peace and union of the Church against any mischievous false brethren, who might be disposed to avail themselves of their place in the bosom of the Church to *endeavor to sow dissensions*, by *inveighing* against our doctrines or discipline, in the sense of unchristian railing and violence. Any other construction of it we have never sanctioned, nor will we. In this view of this rule, we cannot consent to its abolition. On the contrary, we regard it as a Christian and useful rule, and particularly necessary, at the present time, for the well-being of the Church. It is aimed against *licentiousness*, and not against liberty. In the state, as well as in the church, it is found necessary to subject both speech and the press to certain legal responsibilities, which undoubtedly operate as restraints, and tend to guard against licentiousness, by



pense and loss of time, to remain three or four weeks at a General Conference.

"In another document, issued by the convention above alluded to, they say, 'We have been laboring with great attention and perseverance to put the public in possession of our views as fast as we can.' They have also had in circulation for many years a monthly periodical publication, for the express purpose of diffusing their views and advocating their cause, besides the institution of what have been called Union Societies, and of late a convention. Yet, after all these exertions, the great body of our ministers, both traveling and local, as well as of our members, perhaps not much if any short of one hundred to one, still oppose their wishes. This, as before said, has been assumed to be from ignorance or want of intellect, or from some worse principle. But we believe it to be the result of a firm and deliberate attachment to our existing institutions and economy—an attachment which we have the happiness of believing to be increased, rather than diminished, in proportion to the development of the *details* of any *plans* which the memorialists have yet seen fit to exhibit. We put it, then, to the good sense, to the Christian candor, and to the calmer and better feelings of our brethren, whether it be not time to cease to agitate and disturb the Church with this controversy?—at least, if it must be continued, whether it be not time to divest it of that acrimony and virulence which, in too many instances, we fear, has furnished fit matter for the scoff of the infidel and the reproach of common enemies? If this state of things be continued, how can it be said, 'See how *these* Christians love one another!' It grieves us to think of it. We weep between the porch and the altar; and our cry is, 'Spare, O Lord! spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to *this* reproach.'

"We know that we have been charged with wishing to



cians and statesmen might be introduced into our ecclesiastical councils, and, by a 'mutual' combination, aid each other in the accumulation of power and influence. We do not affirm that any of the memorialists seriously meditate such designs. But we do say, that, according to our understanding of the natural tendency of things, the change proposed is just such a one as would be most likely to be adopted by men of *policy* for the accomplishment of such an object; and that, in the present state of the world, nothing would be more impolitic than the continuance of our present economy with any such ambitious schemes in view as some, we fear, and must say, have malevolently insinuated.

"With regard to what have been called 'Union Societies,' we consider the organization of these distinct bodies within the bosom of the Church as the baneful source of the principal evils which of late have so painfully afflicted and distracted some portions of our charge. Such associations, within the pale of the Church, have arrayed and combined all the workings of the spirit of party in their most pernicious and destructive forms. They have drawn a line of separation between those who compose them and their brethren, as organized and systematic adversaries. They have separated chief friends; they have severed the most sacred and endearing ties; and have caused and fomented discord and strife in circles before distinguished for peace and love. And under whatever plausible pretexts they may have been instituted, the Church generally, we believe, has regarded them as calculated, if not designed, either to obstruct the due administration of discipline, by overawing the administration of it, or to prepare an organized secession, in case they should fail in modeling the Church according to their wishes. With these associations numbers, we have no doubt, unwarily became connected at first, from various views, who now feel a



exposing offenders to penalties corresponding to the extent of their *abuse* of liberty. And we confess ourselves among the number of those who, with statesmen and jurists, as well as divines, maintain that even a despotic government is preferable to a state of unbridled anarchy.

“By insinuations of the above description, and by others of an analogous character, attempts have been made to excite against us the jealousy and suspicion of statesmen and politicians, and of the constituted authorities of the civil government. This low stratagem we have always regarded as peculiarly deserving the rebuke of every generous mind, even among our opponents: and we cannot believe otherwise than that it had its origin either in some distempered mind or some perverted heart. The memorialists wish the government of the Church to be assimilated to that of the state. We think, on the other hand, that as there neither is nor ought to be any connection between church and state, so neither is there any obligation or necessity to conform the government of the one to that of the other. That both their origin and their objects differ; and that to aim at conforming them to each other would be more likely, in the course of human events, to terminate in their amalgamation, than the course of denying such analogy, and maintaining the two jurisdictions on their peculiarly distinctive bases, under regulations adapted to the objects for which they were severally designed. In the instances of civil and religious despotism alluded to by the memorialists, as recorded in history, the powers of church and state were combined, and no means were left to the people of appealing or of escaping from the one or from the other. The first step toward producing such a state of things would be to bring ministers of religion and officers of state into a nearer alliance with each other, and thus gradually to effect an assimilation of views, and feelings, and interests. The way being thus prepared, politi-



evil speaking be put away from us, with all malice. And may the God of love and peace be with us.'"

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*Call of a General Convention for 1828.*

The Committee appointed in November, 1827, by the General Convention of the friends of reform, for the purpose of calling another similar convention, "if in the opinion of the committee it be necessary for the promotion of the great principles of Christian liberty, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or for other purposes of importance to the general interests of the Methodist Reformers;" having been duly notified by their chairman, met in Baltimore on Monday, 21st July, 1828; and having taken into consideration the fate of the memorial sent up by the convention to the late General Conference; the decision of the General Conference upon the case of the Rev. Dennis B. Dorsey, the highly exceptionable terms proposed as the condition for the return of the brethren lately expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, and other places, on account of Union Societies; and the publication and circulation of the Mutual Rights, as also the ultimate proceedings of the General Conference, upon the subject of reform in general, as set forth by the report of their committee "on petitions and memorials," are of opinion that the only proper conclusion deducible from the whole is, that the travelling ministry not only



difficulty in disentangling themselves. If, however, the real object of their original institution was to secure an identity of views in the communications to be presented to this General Conference, that object having been now accomplished, we affectionately and respectfully submit it to the peaceably disposed among our brethren who may yet compose them, whether there can yet be any remaining obligation to continue in them; and whether, in fact, they ought not now to be dissolved. In our opinion, considering what have been their past operation and effects, the general peace of the Church can never be restored and settled on any firm and lasting basis till this shall be done.

“We might add much more, but the time fails us. We entreat our brethren to be at peace. It is our earnest and sincere desire. In order to it, on our part, we have advised, and do hereby advise and exhort all our brethren, and all our ecclesiastical officers, to cultivate on all occasions the meekness and gentleness of Christ; and to exercise all the lenity, moderation, and forbearance which may be consistent with the purity of our institutions, and the due and firm administration of necessary discipline, the sacrifice of which we could not but deem too costly, even for peace.

“In conclusion, we say to brethren, ‘If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye our joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let the peace of God rule in our hearts, to the which also we are called in one body; and let us be thankful. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and any praise, let us think on *these* things.—Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and



cieties, associations for purposes of reform, or meetings assembled for elections, then the convention will be prepared to act with understanding and confidence.

The committee wish it to be understood, however, that they in no case advise a separation from the Church, until the sentiments of the reformers generally, can be known, through their respective representatives in the contemplated convention.

In conformity to the trust reposed in us by the convention, for the reasons above stated, we hereby give notice, that another General Convention will be held in the city of Baltimore, in St. John's Church, Liberty street, to begin its session on Wednesday, the 12th day of November next, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

By order of the committee,

SAML. K. JENNINGS, *Chairman.*

## CHAPTER XIV.

### PERSECUTION, EXPULSIONS AND WITHDRAWALS AT CINCINNATI—AND ALSO AT LYNCHBURG, VA.

AN account of persecutions, expulsions, and withdrawal of Reformers from Cincinnati, after the rise of the General Conference on the subject, taken from "an exposition of facts" published in Cincinnati in pamphlet form, immediately after the expulsions, &c.

Prior to the Gen. Conference of 1844, a resolution was drawn up by the brethren at Cincinnati, and presented to that body, when in session, reprehending the proceedings in Baltimore and elsewhere, and requesting the com.



refuse, as being "inexpedient," but absolutely deny the right of the membership, to claim a representation in the legislative department of the Church, and at the same time, assert a *divine* right of the travelling ministry, to legislate for the whole body, to expound the Scriptures, and administer the details of moral discipline. In fact, they consider themselves to be under special obligation to exercise this unlimited and irresponsible authority, as having been imposed upon them, by the great Head of the Church.

The committee are, therefore, of opinion, that it is proper and necessary, that a General Convention should be assembled, to deliberate upon the course which is now to be pursued by the friends of reform.

In discharging this duty, they think it necessary also to suggest to their friends, the propriety and importance of taking suitable measures for effecting the election of their delegates, and for clothing them with the necessary powers to act; whether the contemplated convention shall determine to organize for an independent existence;—to continue their struggle against these lofty pretensions, or peaceably to surrender their rights and give up all for lost.

In those places where reformers are already associated, whether in the form of Union Societies or otherwise, there can be but little difficulty. Where they are not associated, it is desirable that they should call meetings expressly for the purpose, and when assembled, proceed in due form to elect their representatives, and prepare for them their credentials, which should set forth the facts, that they have been duly elected, and signifying the extent of their delegated powers. If this be done in every instance, whether by Union So-



to restore all such members to their former standing; and to adopt such measures as would, in future, prevent the recurrence of similar evils. On the evening of the 1st of June, the Union Society of Cincinnati met, and appointed a committee of five members, to receive the report of the General Conference on Petitions and Memorial Addresses to report thereon. On the 10th of July, the society received the report of their committee. The report was read and adopted, and the following Resolutions were passed.

*Resolved 1.* That we cannot but approve of the conduct of our experienced brethren in Baltimore, in rejecting proposals evidently partial and unjust, and difficult to be complied with.

*Resolved 2.* That we are extremely gratified at that degree of peace and propriety with which they appear to be at present favoured, and we sincerely pray that it may be long continued.

*Resolved 3.* That according to our present feelings and sentiments, we ought, and we therefore design to patronize the "Mutual Rights," and to continue the Union Society, until the meeting of the Convention in November next; and then to be governed by the circumstances may seem to direct.

*Resolved 4.* That in order to prevent unpleasant feelings, we will use our influence with the Editors of the above named periodical, not to insert in its pages any matter calculated to excite the effects above mentioned.

*Resolved 5.* That it is our wish to promote peace and concord; and whatever we can safely surrender to our old side brethren, for peace and quietness sake, we feel disposed to do it. But the liberty of speech, and of the press, with the right to assemble peaceably and